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FILE ONLY

ARCHBISHOP RECEIVES DEATH THREAT AGAINST POPE
By BRAHMA CHELLANEY
MADRAS, INDIA

The archbishop of Madras said Friday he had received an anonymous telegram threatening an assassination of Pope John Paul II during the Roman Catholic leader's visit to India early next month.

Slogans denouncing the pope appeared on walls in the southern city of Madras, where John Paul is to celebrate the largest Mass of his 10-day tour, which begins Feb. 1. Nearly 1 million people are expected to attend the seaside Mass, church leaders have said.

The slogans said: "Pope Get Out;" "Dear Pope, Don't Hope to Convert Hindus;" "Get Lost You Pope;" "Stop Conversions;" "Pope Go Back;" and "Christianity a Trojan Horse of Western Imperialism."

Some of the slogans at the city's Chetpet highway overpass accused John Paul, leader of 800 million Roman Catholics worldwide, of being an agent of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

Archbishop Rayappa Arulappa said the death threat was in a telegram sent from Calcutta. It read: "The pope shouldn't come or we'll get him," he said.

"I immediately handed over the telegram to police," Arulappa told The Associated Press in an interview.

Last month, a Bombay newspaper said it had received an anonymous letter threatening to kill John Paul. It said the letter asked the pope not to come to India if "you want to serve Christianity for some more time."

"The slogans in Madras and the death threat are part of a virulent campaign against the papal tour. These elements are trying to incite the people and disrupt the visit," the archbishop said.

The slogans on walls were signed by the Hindu Munnani (front), a militant organization that recently organized protests in Kerala state against the construction of rostrums for the pope's celebration of Mass at Hindu holy sites.

That dispute, which generated widespread communal tension, was settled when the Catholic church and the state government assured Hindu leaders the podiums would be dismantled immediately after the pope's visit and not remain as monuments.

Former Prime Minister Charan Singh, president of a national opposition party, and the powerful Hindu National Volunteer Corps have said the 14-city papal tour will accelerate the conversion of poor people to Christianity.

"These people are trying to rouse animosity by saying the pope is coming here to convert the poor to Christianity," Arulappa said. "He is coming on a short visit, how can he convert people so quickly?"

Hindu radicals object to the government's invitation to John Paul to tour India as head of the Vatican state. They say he cannot promote Christianity "at the expense of the Indian taxpayers."

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Prosecutor Starts His Final Plea in Pope Plot Trial

By JOHN TAGLIABUE
Special to The New York Times

ROME, Feb. 8 — The prosecutor in the trial of seven Bulgarians and Turks accused of conspiring to murder Pope John Paul II began his final plea this week, contending that there was enough evidence to prove there was a plot but that the state's key witness had sought to torpedo the case by feigning madness.

The prosecutor, Antonio Marini, had been expected to request the acquittal of the three Bulgarians, on the ground that there was not enough evidence to convict them. But Mr. Marini's vigor in pursuing the case led defense lawyers to concede Thursday that it was premature to predict what he would seek when he finishes his plea next week.

Indeed, on Tuesday Mr. Marini cited hearsay evidence, which is acceptable in an Italian court, that further implicated Bulgaria in a plot.

He disclosed that two Turkish witnessea questioned by the court in Turkey last summer said a Turkish acquaintance told them he had made payments to Mehmet Ali Agca, the key witness and the Pope's convicted assailant, from the Bulgarians at the behest of Abuzer Ugurlu. Mr. Ugurlu is a convicted Turkish underworld figure who Mr. Agca contends was a key link to the Bulgarian secret service.

Adolfo Larussa, a lawyer for the Bulgarians, said Mr. Marini would first have to establish proof of a conspiracy and then examine the evidence of involvement as it related to each defendant.

Agca Testimony Key Issue

Mr. Marini, seeking to explain Mr. Agca's unusual behavior in the eight-month trial and to defend the substance of Mr. Agca's testimony, quoted remarks the Turk made in court on Nov. 5. Those remarks were to the effect that Mr. Agca began implicating the Bulgarians in 1982, after initially asserting he had acted alone when shooting the Pope, to blackmail Bulgaria into helping him flee prison in Italy.

Citing the results of psychiatric tests carried out in Turkey, Mr. Marini denied that Mr. Agca was insane.

The prosecutor argued that Mr. Agca later intentionally strove to destroy his own credibility, after concluding Bulgaria sought to obtain his release. "But I thought this trial should have finished last May 27 or 28, after my discourses, those famous discourses," the prosecutor quoted Mr. Agca as saying.

Charge of 'Mystification'

Waving toward the empty cage where Mr. Agca is usually confined during the trial and accusing him of "mystification," the prosecutor recalled how the Turk startled the court at the trial's outset last May by repeatedly declaring that he was Jesus. Mr. Agca also predicted the end of the world. Mr. Agca has rarely attended the trial since it resumed in September after a summer recess.

Mr. Agca also admitted that many other assertions, such as that a former Italian intelligence official — Francesco Pazienza, now in jail in New York on criminal charges — was somehow involved in the plot had served the same purpose of damaging his credibility.

Mr. Agca said he sought to do so, the prosecutor explained, after concluding that the kidnapping of a Vatican employee's daughter in 1983 and subsequent demands for the Turk's release in exchange for the girl's safety, were signs that his Bulgarian and Turkish accomplices had not abandoned him.

Mr. Marini quoted the Turk as saying he was convinced that the Bulgarians and Turks "wanted me to retract my accusations against them, confound the trial, and then I had the task of discrediting the Western press, which continuously accused the Soviet Union and Bulgaria as the principle architects" of terrorism.

Mr. Marini said Thursday that there was enough evidence to prove the existence of a plot, "independently of Agca's statements."

He cited the role of Omer Bagci, one of the Turkish defendants, who admitted delivering to Mr. Agca in a Milan restaurant the weapon that was later used to shoot the Pope. He also cited the testimony of several other Turks who admitted giving Mr. Agca money and other aid for his travels from Turkey, through Bulgaria, to Italy.

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